

WASHINGTON – To strengthen America’s economic competitiveness in a global market, the *America*

*COMPETES Reauthorization Act*

reauthorizes important funding in math and science education and in high-risk, high-reward research, Congresswoman Melissa Bean (IL-08) said in praising passage of the bill today. The bill, HR 5116, passed 262-150.

“The *COMPETES Act* provides critical investments in STEM education to strengthen our nation’s competitiveness,” Bean said. “Science, technology, engineering and math skills are necessary to keeping America’s edge in the global marketplace. As we emerge from this historic recession, we must prepare our workforce not just for short-term recovery, but for long-term growth.”

The *COMPETES Act* of 2010 authorizes investments in science, innovation, and education to strengthen U.S. scientific and economic leadership, support businesses, and create jobs in the short-, mid-, and long-term.

In the short-term, programs like Innovative Technology Federal Loan Guarantees address the immediate need of small- and medium-sized manufacturers. In the mid-term, the bill will strengthen regional economies through programs like Regional Innovation Clusters. To ensure scientific and technological leadership now and long into the future, the bill makes investments in basic research.

The bill also includes authorization of the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Energy and Energy Innovation Hubs to help advance the U.S.’s transition to a clean energy economy and to support the growth of new sectors of the economy.

The bill bolsters science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education through several provisions, including:

- Updating the Robert Noyce Teacher Scholarship program, which trains highly competent secondary teachers in STEM fields to teach in high need schools, by reducing the match requirement and allowing more schools to participate in the program;

- Providing grants to increase the number and quality of students receiving undergraduate degrees in STEM and to improve the STEM learning outcomes for all undergraduate students;
- Providing grants to implement or expand research-based reforms in master's and doctoral level STEM education that emphasize preparation for diverse careers in the STEM workforce; and
- Establishing fellowships to provide recent doctoral degree graduates in STEM fields with the necessary skills to assume leadership roles in STEM education research, program development, and evaluation of education programs.
- Ensuring greater coordination of STEM education programs across federal agencies.
- Increasing participation by women and minorities in STEM fields to expand opportunities to a diverse STEM workforce.

This bill has been endorsed by the members of the business community (U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Business Roundtable, Venture Capital Association, National Association of Manufacturers), the education community (universities across the country, National Science Teachers Association), organizations and companies involved in innovation and research (Biotechnology Industry Organization, IBM), and many others.